

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-24 are pending in this application. By this amendment, claims 1-5 have been amended and new claim 25 has been added. Claims 14-24 have been canceled without prejudice.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 1-24 are directed to patentably distinct species, and requested that the Applicant elect a single species for examination. In particular, the examiner has identified the following species:

Group I: Claim 1

Group II: Claims 2-13

Group III: Claims 14-24

For the purposes of the restriction requirement, the Applicant elects Group II, relating to claims 2-13.

By this amendment, new claim 25 has been added. New claim 25 incorporates the common elements of claims 1 and 2. Claims 1 and 2 have been amended to depend from claim 25. The Applicant submits that new claim 25 is a generic linking claim linking the species in Group I and Group II and that claim 25 be examined by the examiner together with the elected claims 2-13 pursuant to MPEP §809.

Further, the Applicant submits that since the linking claim 25 is to be examined, there would be no additional search burden with regard to searching with regard to Group 1, claim 1 at the same time. Conducting such a search at this time will alleviate the need to conduct additional searching if rejoinder of claim 1 is necessary at a later stage in the Examination.

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Conclusion:

The Applicant submits that the application is in condition to proceed with examination. The examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned with any questions or concerns about this response.

Respectfully submitted,

By: /Jeffrey W. Wong/
Jeffrey W. Wong
Registration No. 46,414

Borden Ladner Gervais LLP
508 Riverbend Drive, Suite 303
Kitchener, Ontario N2K 3S2
Canada

Tel. (519) 741-9100
Fax (519) 741-9149